

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 L-03 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 SS-15 NSC-10

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R 021703Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3083

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, UK

SUBJECT: CIVAIR - CHARTERS

REF: (A) LONDON 8602, (B) STATE 141106

1. SUMMARY. IN FOLLOW-UP TO OUR APPROACH TO DTI OFFICIALS TO URGE UK TO EXTEND AFFINITY CHARTER RULES (REF A) EMBOFF DISCUSSED SAME SUBJECT WITH CAA OFFICIALS, COLEGATE AND BOWLEY. EMBOFF TOOK SAME LINE HE DID IN MEETING WITH HUBBACK AND THOMPSON AND GOT ESSENTIALLY SAME RESPONSE, I.E., THAT UK WILL TAKE OUR VIEWS UNDER CONSIDERATION BUT THAT NO FINAL DECISION ON NEXT SEASON'S CHARTER RULES LIKELY TO BE TAKEN IN NEAR FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

2. AT OUTSET OF MEETING, COLEGATE OBSERVED THAT NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENTS OVER PAST YEAR HAD PLACED BILATERAL AVIATION RELATIONS UNDER CONSIDERABLE STRAIN AND HE NOTED SPECIFICALLY PROBLEMS RELATING TO OTTAWA DECLARATION ON CHARTER PRINCIPLES, SCHEDULED FARE PROBLEMS THIS PAST WINTER, COST OF LIVING COUNCIL'S FARE FREEZE ON NORTH ATLANTIC, WHICH HE SAID CONSTITUTES FLAGRANT VIOLATION

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OF BILATERAL AGREEMENT, AND DILATORY TREATMENT BY CAB

OF LAKER SKYTRAIN APPLICATION. (IT WAS CLEAR FROM HIS COMMENTS THAT LATTER ISSUE IS ONE WHICH MOST RANKLES UK FEELINGS AT PRESENT.) COLEGATE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH IN EACH INSTANCE US WAS ABLE TO CONSTRUCT A REASONED EXPLANATION FOR POSITIONS TAKEN, GENERAL FEELING AMONG UK AVIATION AUTHORITIES WAS THAT UK INTERESTS WERE NOT RECEIVING THE SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION WHICH IT WOULD BE HOPED SHOULD CHARACTERIZE SUCH AN IMPORTANT BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. AS A RESULT, GENERAL CLIMATE OF THAT RELATIONSHIP WAS TURNING SOUR WITH BRITISH AUTHORITIES STARTING TO LOSE CONFIDENCE IN US WILLINGNESS TO ABIDE BY TERMS OF ITS AVIATION UNDERTAKINGS.

3. COLEGATE MAINTAINED THAT THE ADVANCE BOOKING CONCEPT HAS GAINED MULTI-NATIONAL ACCEPTANCE AS A PREFERRED WAY FOR REGULATING CHARTER SERVICES. COLEGATE SAID ABC'S ARE WORKING VERY WELL OUT OF UK AND CAA HAS UNDER CONSIDERATION POSSIBLE RULE CHANGES FOR NEXT SEASON (MOST NOTABLY A POSSIBLE REDUCTION IN ADVANCE BOOKING PERIOD) WHICH WILL MAKE ABC'S EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE TO GENERAL PUBLIC. US VERSION OF ADVANCE BOOKING CONCEPT, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAD PROVED TO BE A FAILURE IN PRACTICE AND US THEREFORE APPARENTLY PLANS TO RELY AGAIN NEXT SEASON ON DISCREDITED AFFINITY CONCEPT, A RETROGRESSIVE STEP IN UK VIEW. COLEGATE SAID IF US WERE ASKING FOR EXTENSION OF AFFINITY RULES TO ALLOW TIME FOR CAB TO MODIFY TGC'S TO MAKE SYSTEM WORK BETTER, UK AND OTHERS IN EUROPE WHO FAVORED THE ADVANCE BOOKING CONCEPT WOULD PROBABLY VIEW US POSITION MORE SYMPATHETICALLY BUT, HE SAID, THIS APPARENTLY NOT THE CASE SINCE THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT CAB CONSIDERING ANY CHANGES IN TGC REQUIREMENTS FOR NEXT SEASON.

4. COLEGATE SAID UK CARRIERS NOT PARTICULARLY KEEN ON EXTENSION OF AFFINITY RULES BECAUSE THEY ARE DOING POORLY IN US AFFINITY MARKET. HE SAID UK SUPPLEMENTALS VIRTUALLY OUT OF US MARKET AT PRESENT AND HE OBSERVED THAT ALTHOUGH UK HAD IN PAST ALWAYS SUPPORTED US IN VIEW THAT SUPPLEMENTAL CARRIERS HAVE USEFUL ROLE TO PLAY IN NORTH ATLANTIC, IF UK HAS NO ECONOMIC STAKE IN SUPPLEMENTAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CARRIAGE OF TRAFFIC THEN IT MIGHT HAVE TO REASSESS ITS POLICY WITH RESPECT TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL INDUSTRY. IN THIS CONNECTION, COLEGATE SAID CAA HAS QUESTION OF QUANTITY CONTROLS ON CARRIAGE OF CHARTER TRAFFIC UNDER CONSIDERATION.

5. ON QUESTION OF US RESTRICTIONS AGAINST BRITISH SUPPLEMENTALS, COLEGATE SAID IN HIS VIEW IF ONE LOOKED

CLOSELY ENOUGH AT ANY AFFINITY CHARTER, RULE VIOLATIONS WOULD BE FOUND YET CAB PRE-LISTING REQUIREMENT HAS ONLY BEEN APPLIED AGAINST FOREIGN SUPPLEMENTALS. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT RECENT UK PRE-LISTING REQUIREMENT HAD BEEN DESIGNED IN PART TO PLACE US OPERATORS AT EQUAL DIS-

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ADVANTAGE BUT HE NOTED UK REGULATION APPLIES TO ALL CARRIERS, BRITISH AND FOREIGN ALIKE. HE MAINTAINED, HOWEVER, THAT EQUALLY IMPORTANT REASON FOR UK PRE-LISTING WAS TO TRY TO DIRECT TRAFFIC AWAY FROM AFFINITY AND TOWARD ADVANCE BOOKING CHARTERS WHICH UK TRYING TO ENCOURAGE.

6. COLEGATE MENTIONED THAT CAA HAD RECENTLY CALLED FOR VOLUNTEERS FROM ITS EMPLOYEES FOR PAID OVERTIME WORK AS WEEKEND AND AFTER-HOURS ENFORCEMENT AGENTS AT HEATHROW AND GATWICK. AS A RESULT, CARRIERS WOULD FIND CONSIDERABLY STEPPED-UP INSPECTION OF INCOMING AND OUTBOUND CHARTER FLIGHTS DURING MONTH OF AUGUST.

7. WHEN FORCED TO FACE UP TO THE HARD QUESTION OF HOW US TOURISTS WOULD TRAVEL TO UK NEXT SEASON IF AFFINITY CHARTERS ARE ABOLISHED, COLEGATE WAS CLEARLY A BIT TROUBLED ALTHOUGH HE ARGUED THAT DIVERSION FROM UK TO OTHER COUNTRIES ALLOWING AFFINITIES WOULD BE LESS THAN WE MAINTAINED WOULD BE THE CASE. LARGELY BECAUSE OF THE QUESTION OF TOURISM FLOW, COLEGATE WAS CAREFUL NOT TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CLOSE THE DOOR ON POSSIBILITY OF EXTENDING AFFINITY RULES, "SUITABLY MODIFIED". HE SAID US VIEWS WOULD BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED BUT NO DECISION WAS LIKELY TO BE MADE BEFORE NOVEMBER WHEN HE SAID IT HAD TENTATIVELY BEEN AGREED THE TWO SIDES WOULD CONSULT ON THE POSSIBILITY OF EXTENDING THE CURRENT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

8. COMMENT. EMBOFF, OF COURSE, REBUTTED A NUMBER OF COLEGATE'S STATEMENTS BUT WASHINGTON AGENCIES SHOULD NOT BELIEVE THAT BRITISH OFFICIALS ARE EASILY PERSUADED TO GIVE UP RATHER STRONGLY-HELD VIEW THAT US PRESENTLY OUT-OF-PHASE WITH EUROPEAN T/HINKING ON CHARTER POLICY AND THAT WE ARE TAKING AN UNDULY HARD-LINE ON A NUMBER OF AVIATION ISSUES OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO UK, MOST NOTABLY THE SKYTRAIN APPLICATION. UNLESS WE DISPLAY A GREATER RESPONSIVENESS TO UK NEEDS AND PRESSURES, OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WILL CONTINUE TO DETERIORATE AND WE SHOULD NOT EXPECT VERY SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION HERE OF OUR OWN INTERESTS. NEITHER SHOULD WE RULE OUT POSSIBILITY THAT UK WILL STAND FIRM ON ITS DECLARED INTENTION TO ABOLISH AFFINITY RULES IF IT FINDS US UNYIELDING ON OTHER ISSUES.

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